

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 L-03 H-01 ACDA-12 MCE-00 IO-13
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FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4510

S E C R E T CONAKRY 1293

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MILI, PEPR, GV, US

SUBJECT: PATROL BOATS FOR GUINEA

REF: (A) CONAKRY 1284, (B) STATE 80087

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BEAVOGUI RAISED QUESTION OF COASTAL PATROL BOATS WITH AMBASSADOR JULY 4. AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED US POSITION AS SET FORTH REF B. PM EXPRESSED STRONG DISAPPOINTMENT, EMPHASIZED PEACEFUL/ECONOMIC USES TO WHICH PATROL BOATS WOULD BE PUT AND CHARGED US VIOLATION OF "MORAL OBLIGATION" TO RESPOND IN KIND TO GUINEAN TERMINATION OF SOVIET TU-95 RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS. WE MAY HAVE INDICATION HOW MUCH THIS WILL AFFECT OUR RELATIONS WITH GOG AFTER BEAVOGUI (PRESUMABLY) REPORTS IT IN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING JULY 7. HOPEFULLY, SOVIET ASSISTANCE ON PATROL BOATS HAS SUBSTANTIALLY SATISFIED GUINEAN REQUIREMENT, AND VEHEMENCE OF PRIME MINISTER'S REACTION MAY HAVE LARGELY REFLECTED HIS PERSONAL EMBARRASSMENT AND ANNOYANCE AT HAVING FAILED TO BRING HOME THE BACON. END SUMMARY.

2. AT END OF LONG, CONTENTIOUS CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR JULY 4 (REF A), PRIME MINISTER BEAVOGUI RAISED QUESTION OF STANDING REQUEST FOR COASTAL PATROL BOATS WHICH HE HAD FIRST SUBMITTED DURING HIS WATERSHED VISIT IN WASHINGTON JUNE 1977. PM COMPLAINED THAT US HAD BEEN UNRESPONSIVE TO THIS REASONABLE

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REQUEST ALTHOUGH GOG HAD GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO DOCUMENT PEACEFUL USES TO WHICH THE BOATS WOULD BE PUT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THEY WOULD BE USED TO PATROL GUINEAN FISHING GROUNDS AND GUARD AGAINST POACHERS WHO REGULARLY STEAL VALUABLE CATCH FROM GUINEA; HE RIDICULED THE IDEA THAT GUINEA MIGHT USE THE BOATS TO ATTACK IVORY COAST OR ANYONE ELSE. PM OBSERVED THAT IN SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS HELD ON SUBJECT, INCLUDING PERUSAL

LAST FALL OF CATALOGUE OF VARIOUS KINDS OF VESSELS, FROM WHICH GOG CHOSE THE LEAST MILITARY TYPE, USG HAD NEVER INDICATED GOG COULD NOT HAVE THE CRAFT. NOW, HE SAID, IT IS CLEAR FROM US SILENCE THAT USG HAS NO INTENTION OF LETTING GUINEA HAVE THE BOATS, AND PM WANTED TO KNOW WHY.

3. AMBASSADOR SPELLED OUT RATIONALE PROVIDED REF B, EMPHASIZING CAREFUL USG EXAMINATION OF THE MATTER AND RECOGNITION OF LEGITIMACY OF GUINEAN NEED FOR COASTAL PATROL CRAFT. SAID USG APPRECIATED DEFENSIVE USES OF PATROL BOATS BUT CONCLUDED THAT AS THEY ARE CLASSIFIED AS MILITARY EQUIPMENT, THEY ARE SUBJECT TO US ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT POLICY. AMBASSADOR ASSURED PM, HOWEVER, THAT USG HAD NO OBJECTION TO GOG ACQUISITION OF SUCH CRAFT AND HOPED THEY COULD BE GOT FROM SOME FRIENDLY POWER.

4. PRIME MINISTER'S DIRECTOR OF CABINET DIALLO, WHO HAD EARLIER SUGGESTED TO DCM THAT ACQUISITION OF PATROL BOATS MIGHT REMOVE NEED TO MAINTAIN SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN GUINEA (CONAKRY 558), THEN BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF SOVIET TU-95 RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS. HE SAID US HAD IN JUNE '77 EXPRESSED CONCERN TO PM ABOUT SOVIET RECONNAISSANCE ACTIVITY AGAINST US NAVY AND ASKED GOG TO PUT AN END TO IT. PM HAD AGREED TO DO SO AND HAD ADVANCED REQUEST FOR COASTAL PATROL BOATS. DIALLO POINTED OUT GOG HAD KEPT ITS PROMISE ON THE TU-95S; IT WAS UP TO THE US TO RESPOND IN KIND. AMBASSADOR POINTED
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OUT THAT CESSATION OF SUCH FLIGHTS WAS IN GUINEA'S OWN INTEREST AS IT WAS IN KEEPING WITH GUINEA'S POLICY OF NONALIGNMENT. DIALLO AND BEAVOGUI BOTH OBJECTED AND ASSERTED THERE WAS A MORAL OBLIGATION INVOLVED IN THE AGREEMENT TO STOP THE FLIGHTS. PM CONCLUDED THAT HIS EFFORTS IN WASHINGTON HAD BEEN A FAILURE AND ASKED HOW HE WAS GOING TO EXPLAIN IT TO HIS GOVERNMENT.

5. AMBASSADOR AGAIN CITED CAREFUL USG REVIEW OF PROBLEM, US SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING FOR GOG DESIRE FOR PATROL BOATS, AND TRANSFER RESTRAINT THAT STANDS IN THE WAY OF APPROVAL. PM WAS IN NO WAY MOLLIFIED AND ASKED AMBASSADOR TO CONVEY HIS STRONG DISAPPOINTMENT AND DISPLEASURE TO DEPARTMENT, EMPHASIZING THAT THERE HAD BEEN A TACIT MORAL COMMITMENT ON THE BOATS AS QUID PRO QUO FOR SUSPENSION OF TU-95 FLIGHTS; GOG HAD KEPT ITS PART OF THE BARGAIN, AND HE WAS NOT PLEASED TO HAVE TO REPORT TO HIS GOVERNMENT THAT USG HAD NOT RECIPROCATED. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT US IS READY TO COOPERATE IN VARIOUS FIELDS, E.G., PL-480, BUT THAT IT IS UNFORTUNATELY NOT POSSIBLE TO ACT ON PATROL BOATS BECAUSE OF ARMS RESTRAINT POLICY.

6. COMMENT: THE SHOE HAS DROPPED, AND WITH A CONSIDERABLE THUD. IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL HOW MUCH IMPACT THIS MAY HAVE ON OUR RELATIONS WITH GOG, WHICH ARE CURRENTLY EXCELLENT. AMBASSADOR HAS SEEN MINISTERS ISMAEL TOURE, MOUSSA DIAKITE AND MAMADI KEITA IN PAST FOUR DAYS AND THEIR ATTITUDE WAS WARM, OPEN AND COOPERATIVE IN EACH CASE. HOWEVER, FACT AND SUBSTANCE OF AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH PM ARE PROBABLY NOT GENERALLY KNOWN YET; WILL LIKELY BE FIRST REPORTED IN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING JULY 7. WE WILL BE ALERT FOR ANY SIGNALS AFTER THAT. IT MAY BE THAT SOVIET REPAIR OF EXISTING GUINEAN PATROL BOATS (SOVIET-PROVIDED). PLUS NEW SOVIET OFFER OF OTHER PATROL CRAFT HAVE SATISFIED GOG REQUIREMENT IN THIS FIELD, AND BEAVOGUI'S OUTBURST MAY THUS HAVE REFLECTED PERSONAL ANNOYANCE AT HAVING TO TELL SEKOU TOURE THAT ONE OF PRINCIPAL

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(IN HIS VIEW) RESULTS OF PM'S JUNE '77 WASHINGTON VISIT HAD PROVED ILLUSORY. WE WILL KEEP OUR FINGERS CROSSED. CROSBY

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NNN

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